BCPharmaCare *Newsletter*

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Please circulate among dispensing staff.

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Tenth Anniversary of PharmaNet

In September 1995, the British Columbia Ministry of Health introduced PharmaNet, the computer network that links all BC community pharmacies, hospital pharmacies and emergency departments to a common data-sharing network. The implementation of PharmaNet made BC the first province with a network capable of processing all prescriptions purchased in the province.

Initially, PharmaNet's most noticeable benefit was that BC residents no longer needed to mail receipts to PharmaCare for reimbursement; PharmaCare could pay its portion of a prescription's cost directly to the pharmacy.

PharmaNet's true value became evident in the months following implementation. As more pharmacies connected to PharmaNet, and medication profiles for BC residents were established, pharmacists and emergency room physicians could access comprehensive, up-to-the-minute information on all medications dispensed to a patient. PharmaNet would alert a pharmacist to possible drug interactions. The pharmacist could then evaluate potential problems and inform patients appropriately.

Pharmacists could add over-the-counter and no-public-access drugs to a patient's PharmaNet medication history. This allowed PharmaNet to include those medications when checking for drug interactions.

Other contributions to patient safety came through the "double-checks" PharmaNet performs, such as verifying that the dose prescribed is within normal limits, that the prescriber is licensed to prescribe the medication, and that there is no unintended duplication in drug therapy.

PharmaNet also enabled the province to reduce prescription fraud and safeguard individuals who might misuse prescription drugs by preventing duplicate prescriptions from being filled at different pharmacies.

In its 2002 report[1], the House of Commons Special Committee on Non-Medical Use of Drugs agreed that PharmaNet was "the most promising monitoring program currently available in Canada." The Committee recommended that the Government of Canada "... assist and encourage the provinces and territories in the development and maintenance of comparable real-time databases so as to track better the prescribing and dispensing of commonly misused prescription drugs."

Three provinces have adopted prescription processing systems and other provinces are expected to follow.

PharmaNet still leads the way, processing all prescriptions purchased in BC, whether or not the medication is a PharmaCare benefit. Ten years after its introduction, PharmaNet continues to serve patients and pharmacists around the clock, 365 days a year.

The successful implementation of PharmaNet depended on valuable input and advice from the College of Pharmacists of BC, the College of Physicians & Surgeons of BC, the BC Pharmacy Association, individual pharmacists and physicians, pharmacy software vendors, and many others.

We would also like to recognize the exemplary work of the HelpDesk staff who act as the first point of contact for PharmaNet users, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Our thanks to all who have contributed to the development and success of this valuable tool.

Happy 10th anniversary, PharmaNet!

[1] Policy for the New Millennium: Working Together to Redefine Canada's Drug Strategy, Interim Report of the Special Committee on Non-Medical Use of Drugs, December 2002.

PharmaCare Trends 2003

PharmaCare Trends 2003 is now available on our Web site. This document is produced by the Ministry of Health to provide information on the BC PharmaCare program for health researchers, government officials and the public.

Audit Settlement—Peoples Drug Mart #120, Lake Cowichan

In July 2005, the Ministry settled the outstanding civil matter concerning the PharmaCare audit of Peoples Drug Mart #120 in Lake Cowichan for the time period of 1997 and January 1999 to April 2000 for the sum of $35,000.

In a previous criminal matter, Elaine Fidyck plead guilty to one count of fraud in excess of $5,000 against PharmaCare. The Supreme Court of British Columbia ordered restitution to be paid to the province ($13,594) and incarceration of nine months relating to the fraud.

Inclusion of Cyclosporine Capsules in the Low Cost Alternative (LCA) Program

Cyclosporine continues to be available for coverage through the PharmaCare Special Authority process. Generic cyclosporine 25mg, 50mg and 100mg capsules are now available. Effective **November 25, 2005**, brand name and generic strengths of cyclosporine capsules will be included in the PharmaCare Low Cost Alternative (LCA) Program.

Patients who have met the published PharmaCare Special Authority criteria and who are already stabilized on Neoral® 25mg, 50mg, and 100mg capsules prior to November 25, 2005, will not be affected. They will continue to receive full benefit coverage of these products (subject to the usual rules of their PharmaCare plan) under indefinite PharmaCare Special Authorities that will be in effect on PharmaNet on November 25, 2005. No action is required by physicians or pharmacists to secure continuing full benefit coverage of Neoral® for these patients.

Prescription claims for patients who have not received indefinite Special Authority approval for cyclosporine and claims for all first-time prescriptions for cyclosporine capsules dispensed on or after **November 25, 2005**, will be reimbursed according to the rules of the LCA Program as follows:

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	MAN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
*CYCLOSPORINE CAP 25MG	2247073	RXP	RHOXAL-CYCLOSPORINE CAP 25MG	F	
	2150689	NVR	NEORAL® CAP 25MG	P	$1.0327
*CYCLOSPORINE CAP 50MG	2247074	RXP	RHOXAL-CYCLOSPORINE CAP 50MG	F	
	2150662	NVR	NEORAL® CAP 50MG	P	$2.0135
*CYCLOSPORINE CAP 100MG	2242821	RXP	RHOXAL-CYCLOSPORINE CAP 100MG	F	
	2150670	NVR	NEORAL® CAP 100MG	P	$4.3163

* Requires Special Authority (please refer to the PharmaCare Web site for criteria).

Blood Glucose Monitoring Strips for Plan B Patients

Blood Glucose Monitoring Strips are not a PharmaCare benefit for permanent residents of long-term care (LTC) facilities, including mental health facilities, covered under PharmaCare Plan B. Submitting claims for Blood Glucose Monitoring Strips for Plan B patients under another PharmaCare plan is inappropriate. Any such claims are subject to audit and recovery.

PMS-Thioridazine products—Removal from PharmaCare Benefit List

Effective **September 15, 2005**, PharmaCare removed PMS-Thioridazine products 25mg tablets (DIN 575119) and 50mg tablets (DIN 575127) from its benefit list at the request of the manufacturer, Pharmascience.

Health Canada, in its Advisory 2005-95 issued September 8, 2005, stated that these anti-psychotic products would no longer be available from manufacturers after September 30, 2005. Health Canada advised patients to continue taking thioridazine but to consult their physician or health care provider as soon as possible to discuss switching to other medication.

CO Pravastatin – Suspension of Health Canada Notice of Compliance

Effective **July 8, 2005**, the following CO pravastatin products have been removed from the PharmaCare benefit list: 10mg tablet (DIN 2248182), 20mg tablet (DIN 2248183), and 40mg tablet (DIN 2248184).

Health Canada has temporarily suspended the Notice of Compliance for these products. Cobalt Pharmaceuticals Inc. suspended distribution and voluntarily recalled CO pravastatin from the market. Please direct any questions regarding this issue to Cobalt Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Zoledronic Acid for Palliative Care—Update

Zoledronic acid (Zometa®) 4mg/vial, **DIN 2242725**, which was included in the palliative care formulary, is no longer available. As an interim measure, zoledronic acid (Zometa®), **DIN 2248296**, has been made a temporary benefit for patients registered in the BC Palliative Care Drug Program.

PharmaCare will provide coverage of this product for registered Palliative Care patients until a full PharmaCare review of the new dosage form submission of zoledronic acid can be completed.

Humira® (Adalimumab)—Correct Quantities/Days Supply

Please note that PharmaCare covers twenty-six 40mg doses of adalimumab per year, administered every other week, as approved through the Special Authority process.

When dispensing adalimumab, the quantity claimed should be the number of syringes dispensed and the days supply should be the period of benefit, for example, Quantity = 2 (syringes), Days Supply = 28.

Special Services Fees

The number of Special Services fees paid by PharmaCare over the past twelve months are:

DATE	NO. OF FEES	DATE	NO. OF FEES
Sep 2005	3,454	Mar 2005	2,888
Aug 2005	3,239	Feb 2005	2,618
Jul 2005	3,046	Jan 2005	2,418
Jun 2005	3,353	Dec 2004	3,885
May 2005	3,135	Nov 2004	3,720
Apr 2005	3,244	Oct 2004	3,513

Low Cost Alternative (LCA) Program / Reference Drug Program (RDP) Updates

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP

The following newly-approved benefits have been added to existing LCA/RDP categories as eligible benefits for Plans B, C, F, I, and, if applicable, Plan G. (For the Plan G formulary, please visit Special Authority Information page of the PharmaCare Web site.)

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	LCA STATUS	RDP	SPECIAL AUTHORITY ONLY
549703	PMT	ACETAMINOPHEN EXTRA STRENGTH TAB 500MG USP	F		Y
2252813	PMT	ACETAMINOPHEN EXTRA STRENGTH TAB 500MG	P		Y
2255251	PMT	ACETAMINOPHEN EXTRA STRENGTH EASY TO SWALLOW TAB 500MG	P		Y
2260077	APX	APO-BRIMONIDINE DROPS 0.2%	F		
2266008	APX	APO-FOSINOPRIL TAB 10MG	P*	Y	
2266016	APX	APO-FOSINOPRIL TAB 20MG	P*	Y	
2246066	GPM	GEN-COMBO STERINEBS SOL INH	F		Y
2257092	GPM	GEN-PRAVASTATIN TAB 10MG	P		
2257106	GPM	GEN-PRAVASTATIN TAB 20MG	P		
2257114	GPM	GEN-PRAVASTATIN TAB 40MG	P		
2270129	GPM	GEN-ALENDRONATE TAB 10MG	F		Y
2257378	GPM	GEN-AMILAZIDE TAB 50/5MG	P		
2267470	NOP	NOVO-BISOPROLOL TAB 5MG	F		
2267489	NOP	NOVO-BISOPROLOL TAB 10MG	F		
2267985	UNK[3]	RAN-ATENOLOL TAB 50MG	P		
2267993	UNK[3]	RAN-ATENOLOL TAB 100MG	P		
2268027	UNK[3]	RAN-CARVEDILOL TAB 3.125MG	F		Y
2268035	UNK[3]	RAN-CARVEDILOL TAB 6.25MG	F		Y
2268043	UNK[3]	RAN-CARVEDILOL TAB 12.5MG	F		Y
2268051	UNK[3]	RAN-CARVEDILOL TAB 25MG	F		Y
2267934	UNK[3]	RAN-CIPROFLOXACIN TAB 250MG	P		
2267942	UNK[3]	RAN-CIPROFLOXACIN TAB 500MG	P		
2267950	UNK[3]	RAN-CIPROFLOXACIN TAB 750MG	P		
2268000	UNK[3]	RAN-CITALOPRAM TAB 20MG	P		
2268019	UNK[3]	RAN-CITALOPRAM TAB 40MG	P		

F — Fully covered
P — Fully covered if drug cost is less than or equal to the LCA price.
P* — Drug is a full benefit if RDP Special Authority is in place.
3 — Ranbaxy Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc.

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP, continued

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	LCA STATUS	RDP	SPECIAL AUTHORITY ONLY
2268078	UNK[3]	RAN-DOMPERIDONE TAB 10MG	P		
2267969	UNK[3]	RAN-LOVASTATIN TAB 20MG	P		
2267977	UNK[3]	RAN-LOVASTATIN TAB 40MG	P		
2269031	UNK[3]	RAN-METFORMIN TAB 500MG	P		
2269058	UNK[3]	RAN-METFORMIN TAB 850MG	P		
2267918	UNK[3]	RAN-ZOPICLONE TAB 5MG	P		Y
2267926	UNK[3]	RAN-ZOPICLONE TAB 7.5MG	P		Y
2260913	RPH	RATIO-GABAPENTIN TAB 600MG	P		Y†
2260921	RPH	RATIO-GABAPENTIN TAB 800MG	P		Y†
2267292	RXP	RHOXAL-MIRTAZAPINE FC TAB 30MG	F		
2264749	TAR	TARO-MOMETASONE OINTMENT 0.1%	F		
2265885	TAR	TARO-SIMVASTATIN TAB 10MG	P		
2265893	TAR	TARO-SIMVASTATIN TAB 20MG	P		
2265907	TAR	TARO-SIMVASTATIN TAB 40MG	P		

F — Fully covered.
P — Fully covered if drug cost is less than or equal to the LCA price.
† — Plan G coverage requires Special Authority.
3 — Ranbaxy Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc.

New LCA Categories

Please be advised that the following drugs, including both existing PharmaCare benefits and new PharmaCare benefits, will be included as new LCA Categories on PharmaNet, effective **November 25, 2005**.

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	MAN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
*ALENDRONATE TAB 70MG	2258110	OBT	CO-ALENDRONATE TAB 70MG	F	
	2248730	APX	APO-ALENDRONATE TAB 70MG	P	$5.7862
	2261715	NOP	NOVO- ALENDRONATE TAB 70MG	P	$5.7862
	2245329	UNK[1]	FOSAMAX® TAB 70MG	P	$5.7862
*ALENDRONATE TAB 40MG	2258102	OBT	CO-ALENDRONATE TAB 40MG	F	
	2201038	UNK[1]	FOSAMAX® TAB 40MG	P	$2.7085
CILAZAPRIL TAB 1MG	2266350	NOP	NOVO-CILAZAPRIL TAB 1MG	F	
	1911465	HLR	INHIBACE® TAB 1MG	P	$0.4287
CILAZAPRIL TAB 2.5MG	2266369	NOP	NOVO-CILAZAPRIL TAB 2.5MG	F	
	1911473	HLR	INHIBACE® TAB 2.5MG	P	$0.4941
CILAZAPRIL TAB 5MG	2266377	NOP	NOVO-CILAZAPRIL TAB 5MG	F	
	1911481	HLR	INHIBACE® TAB 5MG	P	$0.5740
*CYCLOSPORINE CAP 25MG	2247073	RXP	RHOXAL-CYCLOSPORINE CAP 25MG	F	
	2150689	NVR	NEORAL® CAP 25MG	P	$1.0327
*CYCLOSPORINE CAP 50MG	2247074	RXP	RHOXAL-CYCLOSPORINE CAP 50MG	F	
	2150662	NVR	NEORAL® CAP 50MG	P	$2.0135
*CYCLOSPORINE CAP 100MG	2242821	RXP	RHOXAL-CYCLOSPORINE CAP 100MG	F	
	2150670	NVR	NEORAL® CAP 100MG	P	$4.3163
*LEFLUNOMIDE TAB 10MG	2261251	NOP	NOVO-LEFLUNOMIDE TAB 10MG	F	
	2256495	APX	APO-LEFLUNOMIDE TAB 10MG	P	$6.2706
	2241888	AVP	ARAVA® TAB 10MG	P	$6.2706
*LEFLUNOMIDE TAB 20MG	2261278	NOP	NOVO-LEFLUNOMIDE TAB 20MG	F	
	2256509	APX	APO-LEFLUNOMIDE TAB 20MG	P	$6.2706
	2241889	AVP	ARAVA® TAB 20MG	P	$6.2706
MEDROXYPROGESTERONE ACETATE TAB 100MG	2267640	APX	APO-MEDROXY TAB 100MG	F	
	30945	PFI	PROVERA® TAB 100MG	P	$0.8867
OXYCODONE HCL TAB 20MG	2262983	SIL	SUPEUDOL® TAB 20MG	F	
	2240132	PFR	OXY.IR® TAB 20MG	P	$0.5364

* — Requires Special Authority (please refer to the PharmaCare Web site for criteria).

1 — Merck Frosst

New LCA Categories, continued

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	MAN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
*PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM INJ 3MG/ML	2264951	RXP	RHOXAL-PAMIDRONATE 3MG/ML	F	
	2244550	MYP	PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM INJ 3MG/ML	P	$9.1698
*PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM INJ 6MG/ML	2264978	RXP	RHOXAL-PAMIDRONATE 6MG/ML	F	
	2244551	MYP	PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM INJ 6MG/ML	P	$18.3397
*PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM INJ 9MG/ML	2264986	RXP	RHOXAL-PAMIDRONATE 9MG/ML	F	
	2244552	MYP	PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM INJ 9MG/ML	P	$27.5095
PHENYTOIN SODIUM ORAL SUSP 125	2250896	TAR	TARO-PHENYTOIN ORAL SUSP 125MG/5ML	F	
	23450	PFI	DILANTIN-125™ SUSPENSION	P	$0.0322
SUMATRIPTAN SUCCINATE TAB 25MG	2257882	OBT	CO-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 25MG	F	
	2268906	GPM	GEN-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 25MG	F	
	2256428	PMS	PMS-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 25MG	F	
	2239738	UNK[2]	IMITREX DF™ TAB 25MG	P	$9.3307
SUMATRIPTAN SUCCINATE TAB 50MG	2268388	APX	APO-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 50MG	F	
	2257890	OBT	CO-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 50MG	F	
	2268914	GPM	GEN-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 50MG	F	
	2256436	PMS	PMS-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 50MG	F	
	2263025	RXP	RHOXAL-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 50MG	F	
	2212153	UNK[2]	IMITREX DF™ TAB 50MG	P	$9.4086
SUMATRIPTAN SUCCINATE TAB 100MG	2268396	APX	APO-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 100MG	F	
	2257904	OBT	CO-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 100MG	F	
	2268922	GPM	GEN-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 100MG	F	
	2239367	NOP	NOVO-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 100MG	F	
	2256444	PMS	PMS-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 100MG	F	
	2263033	RXP	RHOXAL-SUMATRIPTAN TAB 100MG	F	
	2212161	UNK[2]	IMITREX DF™ TAB 100MG	P	$10.3651
TOPIRAMATE TAB 25MG	2263351	GPM	GEN-TOPIRAMATE TAB 25MG	F	
	2248860	NOP	NOVO-TOPIRAMATE TAB 25MG	F	
	2262991	PMS	PMS-TOPIRAMATE TAB 25MG	F	
	2256827	RPH	RATIO-TOPIRAMATE TAB 25MG	F	
	2260050	RXP	RHOXAL-TOPIRAMATE TAB 25MG	F	
	2230893	JSO	TOPAMAX® TAB 25MG	P	$0.7628

2 — Glaxosmithkline Inc.

* — Requires Special Authority (please refer to criteria on PharmaCare Web site)

New LCA Categories, continued

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	MAN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
TOPIRAMATE TAB 100MG	2263378	GPM	GEN-TOPIRAMATE TAB 100MG	F	
	2248861	NOP	NOVO-TOPIRAMATE TAB 100MG	F	
	2263009	PMS	PMS-TOPIRAMATE TAB 100MG	F	
	2256835	RPH	RATIO-TOPIRAMATE TAB 100MG	F	
	2260069	RXP	RHOXAL-TOPIRAMATE TAB 100MG	F	
	2230894	JSO	TOPAMAX® TAB 100MG	P	$1.4458
TOPIRAMATE TAB 200MG	2263386	GPM	GEN-TOPIRAMATE TAB 200MG	F	
	2248862	NOP	NOVO-TOPIRAMATE TAB 200MG	F	
	2263017	PMS	PMS-TOPIRAMATE TAB 200MG	F	
	2256843	RPH	RATIO-TOPIRAMATE TAB 200MG	F	
	2267837	RXP	RHOXAL-TOPIRAMATE TAB 200MG	F	
	2230896	JSO	TOPAMAX® TAB 200MG	P	$2.2885

LCA/RDP Booklet Changes

Please be advised that the following changes will be made to LCA Category prices (partial reimbursement prices) and/or the benefit status of drugs within an LCA category.

Effective **immediately**:

CATEGORY		LCA PRICE	NEW STATUS
MORPHINE SULPHATE INJ 2MG/ML			
1964437	SABEX MORPHINE SULFATE INJ 2MG/ML	no change	F

Effective **November 25, 2005**, due to LCA price decrease:

CATEGORY		NEW LCA PRICE	STATUS
PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM 30MG/10ML			
2059762	AREDIA® INJ 30MG/10ML	91.6980*	no change
PAMIDRONATE DISODIUM 90MG/10ML			
2059789	AREDIA® INJ 90MG/10ML	275.095**	no change

* — LCA price per 10ML vial is set at LCA price per ml of pamidronate disodium 6MG/ML times 10.

** — LCA price per 10ML vial is set at LCA price per ml of pamidronate disodium 9MG/ML times 10.

Limited Coverage Program

The following new products have been included as eligible PharmaCare benefits under the Limited Coverage Program by **Special Authority only** (please visit the PharmaCare Web site for criteria):

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2247238	NVR	ELIDEL® (pimecrolimus cream) 1.0%
2244148	UNK[1]	PROTOPIC® (tacrolimus ointment) 0.1%
2244149	UNK[1]	PROTOPIC® (tacrolimus ointment) 0.03%

1 — Astellas Pharma Canada Inc.